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ABSTRACT

The paper describes a model for the planning and organization of work preparation facilities for the mildly retarded, and discusses the application of its modified systems approach at the Granville Work Preparation Centre in Australia. Components of the model discussed include the establishment of behavioral goals, the determination of instructional sequences and methods, the establishment of evaluation procedures, the determination of specific resource needs, the assembly of resources, the implementation of the program itself, and the achievement of terminal goals. Aspects of the Granville Center reviewed include the follow-up of students, the students' employment record, the realization of objectives, and the social competence of the students. (DLS)

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A MODEL FOR THE PLANNING AND ORGANISATION OF WORK PREPARATION FACILITIES FOR THE MILDLY INTELLECTUALLY HANDICAPPED [1,2]

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INTRODUCTION

The expansion of services for the handicapped has been accompanied by a parallel desire to ensure that scarce financial and manpower resources be depolyed in an effective and economical manner: in Australia this is exemplified by the recent Task Force on Welfare and Health, (Bailey, 1977). To serve this purpose systems models derived from operational research along the lines suggested by Alexander (1974) and Montello and Wimberly (1975) have been commonly used, particularly where professional management consultancy has been available for the organisation of community services. Obvious examples of the influence of this approach are the concepts of service delivery and delivery systems which represent the formal organisational aspects of services in such terms as their identification of target populations, assessment of needs; design of delivery systems, resource management and implementation.

The following describes the application of a modified systems approach to the planning and organisation of work preparation facilities for the mildly intellectually handicapped. Some illustrated data from the current Department of Social Security Research Project to develop and evaluate programs at the Granville Work Preparation Centre are presented.

Systems models incorporate procedures for ongoing evaluation of effectiveness and general utility of services. It is always necessary to assess the working of such basic functions as finding target populations, obtaining acceptance of delivery and the overall effectiveness of what is delivered. Though many community agencies have evolved in a more or less haphazard way, the planning of human services in modern highly complex societies, however, normally proceeds from general statements of the community's will or values, which may be expressed through some form of political decision to establish, reorganise or expand provisions. Here concensus may be difficult to achieve and there can be no doubt that in many areas of social need there occurs an additional set of problems between the articulation of corporate goals and the community's attempts to arrive at policies which will translate them into effective action. For example, a study of the last 20 years would indicate that the mildly retarded, culturally disadvantaged and linguistically deviant groups of children have suffered considerably as a result of the unsystematic resource management which inevitably results from a lack of coherent policies.

In the light of this, those of us engaged in the Granville Work Preparation Centre project have consequently felt a need to systematise our own thinking by formulating a decision model for the organisation and development of work preparation facilities for the mildly intellectually handicapped. The following joint paper will, therefore, provide a brief general description of the model, together with some more detailed comments on those components about which we have obtained research data or which are currently emphasized in development projects.

Our account will be followed by a short paper on the present work of the Granville Centre by Miss Scott, which illustrates the developmental nature of the Work Preparation Centre concept and contains a number of points relevant to its operation. We recognise that, other than in terms of their inherent logic, models of this type can only be evaluated realistically in terms of their eventual utility, but we offer it nevertheless in the modest hope that it will serve as firm reference points to events in the immediate past history of the project and will perhaps lead to more systematic decision making in the future.

Fig. 1 about here

Part 1 of the model, therefore, proceeds from some expression or awareness of community values for the mildly intellectually handicapped translated into goals for their life style and employability. These can then presumably be used as the basis to an investigation of need, which can facilitate the decision to establish, expand or reorganise services. Planning, of course, requires an analysis of available resources. For the present purpose we have proposed three contrasting resource model situations: in the case of current facilities in the Sydney area, Resource Model No.2 seems to be the most appropriate. Selection of an appropriate target population is of crucial importance as probably more than any other single factor it is likely to influence the realisation of institutional aims.

Once clients have been selected and inducted into the process, it is necessary that their training and general social experiences should be identifiable and logically ordered in the light of some reasonably explicit philosophy of instruction. Some components of this are represented in Part 2.

Fig. 2 about here

Part 2 concludes with decisions about specific resource needs and leads to Part 3 which represents the operations of the actual implementation of a program within which resources are assembled, various staffing needs are met and materials delivered. Once under way, programs will inevitably include response to variations in needs and resources resulting from process evaluation and feedback; eventually there will be evaluation of terminal goals.

Fig. 3 about here

The research team thus far has collected, or is collecting, data pertaining to only a limited number of the elements of the model. Here it is noteworthy, for instance, that the community is still in the process of formulating corporate goals in the area of rehabilitation and in any event the organisation of service delivery is still very much under discussion, as witness the attitudes of some of the significant groups whose cooperation will be required for effective delivery whatever

the eventual nature of the system. We are currently analysing, for example, the results of a survey of the attitudes to educational provision for the mildly retarded held by school principals from both government and non-government schools in N.S.W. One obviously important item of the questionnaire refers to the responsibility for preparing mildly intellectually handicapped students to obtain and hold satisfactory employment. Preliminary results indicate that the large majority of respondents are "inclined to agree" (36%) or "strongly agree" (29%) with the suggestion that the schools have a responsibility for some form of pre-vocational training for this group. A second further item asks for a list of sample options for the content of pre-vocational courses to be ranked. Firm preference is given to the notion of a curriculum which emphasises the usual basic skills of literacy and numeracy and is supported by work experience programs within the community. Next in preference comes the type of curriculum which emphasises both academic and social skills. It is interesting to note that the traditional offering for slow learning students: i.e. a curriculum based upon craft, art and domestic science, is relatively unpopular. Thus, at first sight, it appears that there is acceptance both of the school's direct responsibility for pre-vocational preparation and indeed of the necessity for work experience. However, the nature and intensity of such work preparation varies according to the type of school and is a rather more contentious issue. In addition to principals, an equally important source of attitudes are of course the potential employers of this population and a wide ranging survey of their views will be made in the future.

Follow-up of students

In order to inform, among other things, future selection policies, follow-up of the first group of trainees is in progress. Thus far 67% of these have been interviewed. Information obtained during these interviews focuses upon post-training employment history, the ex-trainee's perceptions of their work preparation and subsequent job performance, and upon those aspects of social competence relating to self-help skills, interpersonal skills and citizenship.

Although the sample (N = 30) was originally classified and referred to the WPC as mildly mentally retarded, analysis revealed that 67% of

the sample interviewed had other disabilities ranging from physical handicaps to emotional and psychological disturbances.

Some general group characteristics are:

Sex of the ex-trainees	M = 16, F = 14
Mean age on leaving school	15 years 8 months
Mean time spent at the WPC	10.2 months
Mean age at time of survey (30.6.77)	19 years 1 month

Employment record

A technique for determining employment records similar to that used by Richardson and Krieger (1976) was applied. By calculating the actual time employed since leaving the WPC over the potential time employable, and converting to a percentage, it was ascertained that, despite present economic circumstances, the total group interviewed has held employment 81.4% of its potential employment time. Eleven of the 30 have had full open employment, 9 have had full sheltered employment, 8 a history of intermittent open employment and 2 are in receipt of the invalid pension and have never held employment. Thus, 66% of the group have been fully employed since leaving the WPC, initially a most promising finding.

Realization of Centre Objectives

Training at the WPC during 1974-1975 consisted of a model of exposure to the work situation, with specific objectives relating to the establishment of appropriate work habits and work attitudes.

From our follow-up interviews, it appears these objectives have usually been achieved. Ex-trainees appear to be confident and demonstrate competence in such areas as bundying on, regular and punctual attendance, ringing in when sick, correcting mistakes, reporting to supervisors in case of machine breakdown or work problems, and giving and receiving notice. The majority of the sample nominated such behaviours relating to work performance as the most important things learned at the Centre. Ex-trainees appeared realistic about work prospects, indicated a firm desire to remain in employment, and expressed positive attitudes towards having a job.

The follow-up revealed an important methodological difficulty. It is interesting, though not perhaps surprising, that a substantial proportion of the sample appear to have been totally integrated into

the work force and are no longer identified or identifiable as "mildly mentally retarded". They do not, therefore, welcome any contacts which might relabel them as such; a finding consonant with the Edgerton and Bercovici (1976) longitudinal study.

Social Competence

The majority of the sample (90%) are still living with parents, but are paying board. They appear to have developed competent skills in travelling, budgeting and banking and most are saving money for the future. A number have obtained a driving licence and also own their own car.

Whilst basic self-help skills appear adequate in the main, interpersonal skills show, however, in a much less favourable light. Many evidently have no or few friends, have very little social contact, and spend leisure time at home watching television. Membership in social clubs, sporting clubs or other groups seems rare and dependence on family is high. Awareness of the implications of these findings has resulted in the design and implementation of programs for the development of competence in interpersonal relationships.

A further area of need highlighted by the interviews is that of informed citizenship. Knowledge of voting and legal rights, legal responsibilities and methods of interacting are essential aspects of a program which will prepare adolescents not only for work, but for independent living within the community.

The completion of the follow-up interviews of the 1974-1975 ex-trainees is currently under way and should provide the WPC with additional feedback for program development and sophistication.

It is proposed to comment upon the remaining components of the model sequentially.

Part 2

A) Establishment of behavioural goals: enroute and terminal

Goals which relate to all areas of performance such as work, social and academic skills are established then in terms of:

a) the values and aspirations the community has for this population generally.
b) the specific needs of the sub-population chosen.
c) the skills required for a trainee to enter and secure permanent employment and fulfilment in the general workforce.

Intermediate goals are established by task analysis of the terminal goals and this may involve an observation of "normal" workers operating in a normal environment, together with an indication of what constitutes "employability" from persons in supervisory positions.

Determination of instructional sequences and methods

Once the survey of employer attitudes is under way we shall be seeking the cooperation of selected employers for access to places of work so that work skills and the work environment may be analysed along the lines suggested by the U.S. Department of Labor Handbook for Analysing Jobs and the work of Salvendy & Seymour (1973) and Davies (1973) translated into pilot programs for evaluation in the Granville WPC setting. This will hopefully provide insights into a teachable range of occupations. The next step will involve the selection of appropriate methods of instruction for the sub-population chosen, i.e. more difficult cases will require more precise instructional technologies as outlined by writers such as Nettlebeck and Kirby (1976) and Nettlebeck (1977).

This need will naturally determine selection of instructors and their training, also the nature and composition of the support staff. To facilitate these developments we are attempting to lend staff training programs of the Granville WPC a specific emphasis upon the instructional needs of the mildly handicapped.

A more specific project prompted by the exemplary work of Gold (1968, 1973, 1975, 1976) and Whelan (1973) and currently under way at the Granville WPC is concerned with the establishment of a model program utilizing the technique of "backward chaining" on an assembly task. Once the instructional sequence has been established, further studies will be conducted to demonstrate the validity and generalizability of

the model. In the field of reading skills a further experiment is being conducted to determine the usefulness of auto-instructional techniques. Should its results prove favourable, particularly in respect to the retention of learned material as were the findings of Vergason (1966), supplementation of existing resources with audio-visual material of this type should allow for a greater individualization of instruction and training in both social and job skill areas.

Whatever the eventual nature of the instructional advanced methods used, it is plausible to assume that their effectiveness will be enhanced by taking into account the personal characteristics of the learner: the so-called aptitude-treatment interaction. Though this concept is not generally acceptable in education, there is a possibility that input of basic learner characteristics may be crucial to successful programming for the retarded. As one approach to this problem we are, therefore, investigating the feasibility of using the impulsivity/ reflectivity dimension initially conceptualized by Kagan (1965).

B. Establishment of evaluation procedures

The Systems approach requires two basic forms of evaluation process and product, a point emphasized by contemporary writers such as Schulberg and Baker (1968), Budde and Menolascino (1971), Budde (1972), and Bolton (1976). The former relates to initial and ongoing testing of the program and will involve the preparation of screening tests for both initial assessment and to guide program planning. Here there seems to be a pressing need for some form of a general purpose diagnostic performance battery and we hope to carry out pilot experimentation with a view to constructing such an instrument. Next, specially devised tests are required to assess the trainee's performance at each stage of the program: the more disabled the trainee, the more frequent and thorough the testing. Sensitive monitoring of the instructional program is aimed at maximizing program effectiveness and the elimination of wasteful practices. Product evaluation is conducted at the end of the program and is a test of the goals as stated at the commencement of the program. It may be necessary to extend such evaluation longitudinally beyond the initial job placement in order to monitor the qualitative aspects of the vocational adjustment.

C. Determination of specific resource needs

The sub-population selected, goals established, instructional

sequences and methods selected and the type and intensity of evaluation procedures will all determine the particular resources required for effective implementation. Decisions made here will determine the type of facility in which programs will be conducted. For instance, in order to achieve some employment goals, it may be necessary to conduct training in the actual job situation along the lines of Work Experience or Work Therapy programs. This will also affect all aspects of staff selection and training.

Part 3

A. Assembly of Resources

With large numbers of people requiring expert assistance, unnecessary duplication and wastage within the Rehabilitation Service cannot be allowed to occur and the removal of historical barriers between categories of handicap should be accelerated; a point ably argued by Gage (1976) in his discussion of the integration of human services delivery systems. Skilful professional help may be required to assist at each stage of a work preparation program and a flexible and dynamic staffing pattern should be developed in order to meet ongoing needs. This may require perhaps the sessional employment of Occupational Therapists, Speech Therapists, Psychiatrists, Psychologists, Education Officers, Vocational Counsellors, Specialist Instructors and Social Workers. The Executive Officer or Program Director should have the freedom to recommend the type and quantity of staff required to meet program needs within the finite staffing establishment. We hope to make some general recommendations in this area in later reports.

Contracts

A significant resource which is often in short supply is the contract - traditionally the life blood of workshops, WPC's and WAC's. Here, it is evident that a rationalization and coordination must be applied so that avoidable duplication of effort does not occur. Consideration may be given to the concept of a central or regional register. However, much will depend upon the availability of a range of fairly stable contracts and in this regard the U.S. legislation of Affirmative Action whereby all government contracts must involve a percentage of handicapped workers may be a useful guide. The Bright Committee in S.A. is exploring the issue of the legal rights of the handicapped child in the context of the United Nations Declaration and this may be a pointer to further action in Australia.

B. Program Inplementation

Once the basic inputs of the s stem have been organised, the most crucial stage of program implementation is reached. Initial screening of trainees at the induction stage assists in the determination of program priorities. For instance, some trainees may require more intensive academic and/or communication training; others may need social interaction skills whilst others may need intensive fine motor skill training. An essential ingredient is the skilful coordination of all facets of the program to ensure that individual needs are met expeditiously and economically.

It is now clear that the quality control of programs being conducted in Rehabilitation and subsidized facilities will be a crucial issue when future questions of the expansion of resources are raised. Mere exposure to work situations under the questionable "work conditioning" model which stresses the inculcation of simple "work habits" can no longer pass as an effective form of program although this may have been the pervasive philosphy when WPC's were initially set up. Our follow-up data on the first graduates of Granville WPC (Ward et al, 1977) indicate that this Centre even in its first months of operation was able to pass on effectively work orientation skills to its clients. This is only a first step, however, in the process of raising the potential of a handicapped person to reach a higher level of fulfilment.

C. Terminal goals

Effective team effort, supported by adequate resources and by sensitive ongoing evaluation enhances the probability that terminal goals will be met, but it must be stressed that longitudinal evaluation of the quality of personal, social and vocational adjustment of trainees is also a basic responsibility of the work preparation service. This will maintain the accountability for output from the system. Traditionally, in systems terms, we have concentrated excessively upon tabulating outputs as evidence of work accomplished. But the human and economic aspects of output need to be continually exposed for public appraisal. In this way it will be possible to seek an extension of services in an open and informed climate of opinion.

Such evaluation also provides feedback to all points of the system; the goal specification level, the population selection level and

particularly to the implementation level. Ultimately, positive results must favourably affect the community's attitudes and value systems resulting, hopefully, in high levels of aspiration and generous positive discrimination for the intellectually handicapped.

Final comments

Systems approaches offer some possibility at least of examining the formal nature of the planning and organisational process, irrespective of its content. Thus far the model which has been outlined has enabled us to develop our thinking in these areas with particular reference to resource management in the area of interdisciplinary cooperation. And for the present purpose, it has enabled us to focus upon some aspects of the past history and ongoing development of work preparation centres in ways which are capable of future conceptual development. However, in addition to calling attention to such crucial areas as the interfaces between systems, models of this type contribute most importantly towards the rationalisation of the components of the particular system. Miss Scott's description of the past and present function of Granville Work Preparation Centre amply illustrates these points in terms of their potential.

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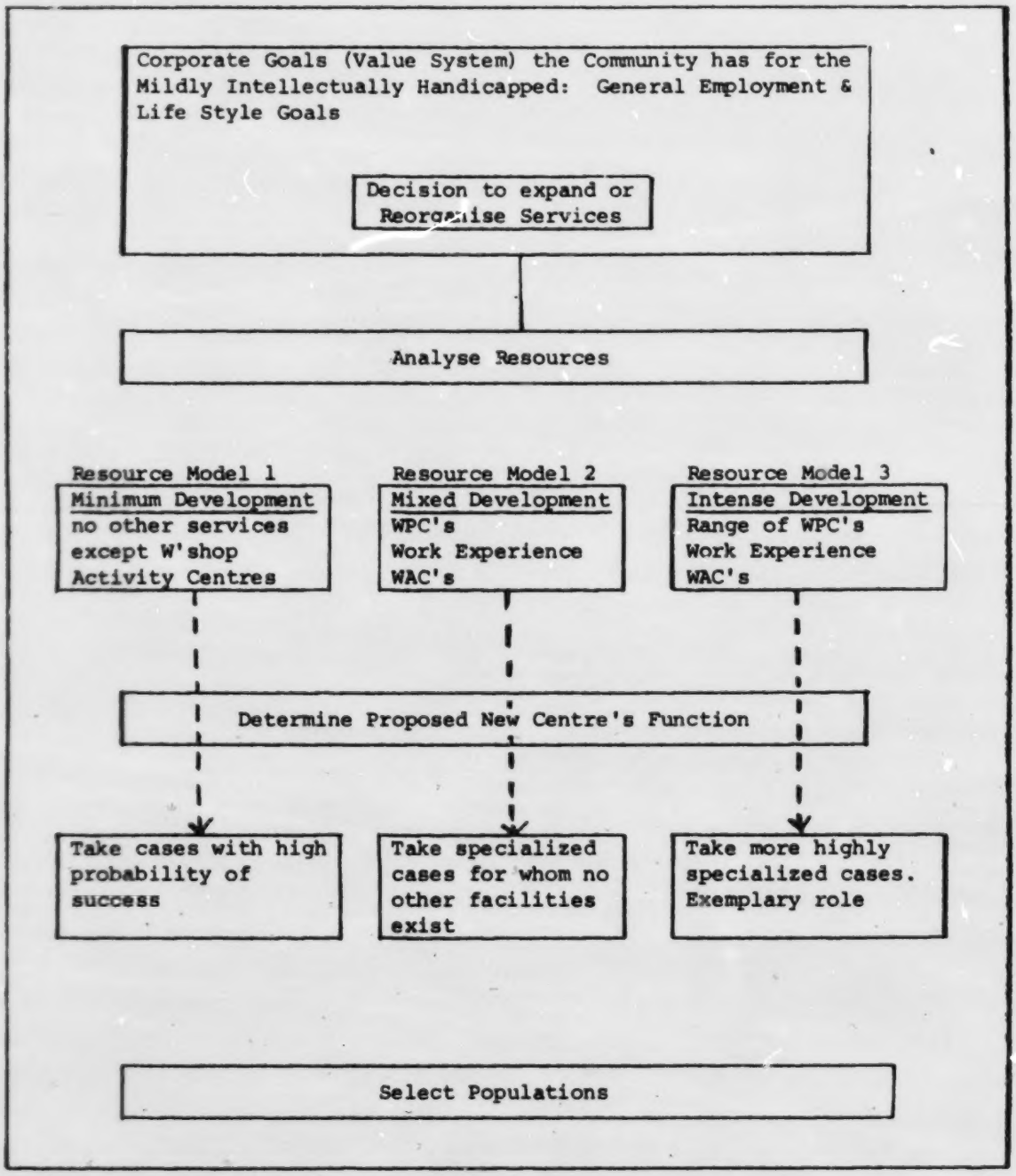
Corporate Goals (Value System) the Community has for the Mildly Intellectually Handicapped: General Employment & Life Style Goals
Decision to expand or Reorganise Services
Analyse Resources
Resource Model 1
Minimum Development
no other services except W'shop Activity Centres
Resource Model 2
Mixed Development
WPC's
Work Experience
WAC's
Resource Model 3
Intense Development
Range of WPC's
Work Experience
WAC's
Determine Proposed New Centre's Function
Take cases with high probability of success
Take specialized cases for whom no other facilities exist
Take more highly specialized cases. Exemplary role
Select Populations

FIG. 1. DECISION MODEL FOR THE EXPANSION OF WORK PREPARATION FACILITIES FOR THE MILDLY INTELLECTUALLY HANDICAPPED

Part 1: Steps leading to the selection of a population

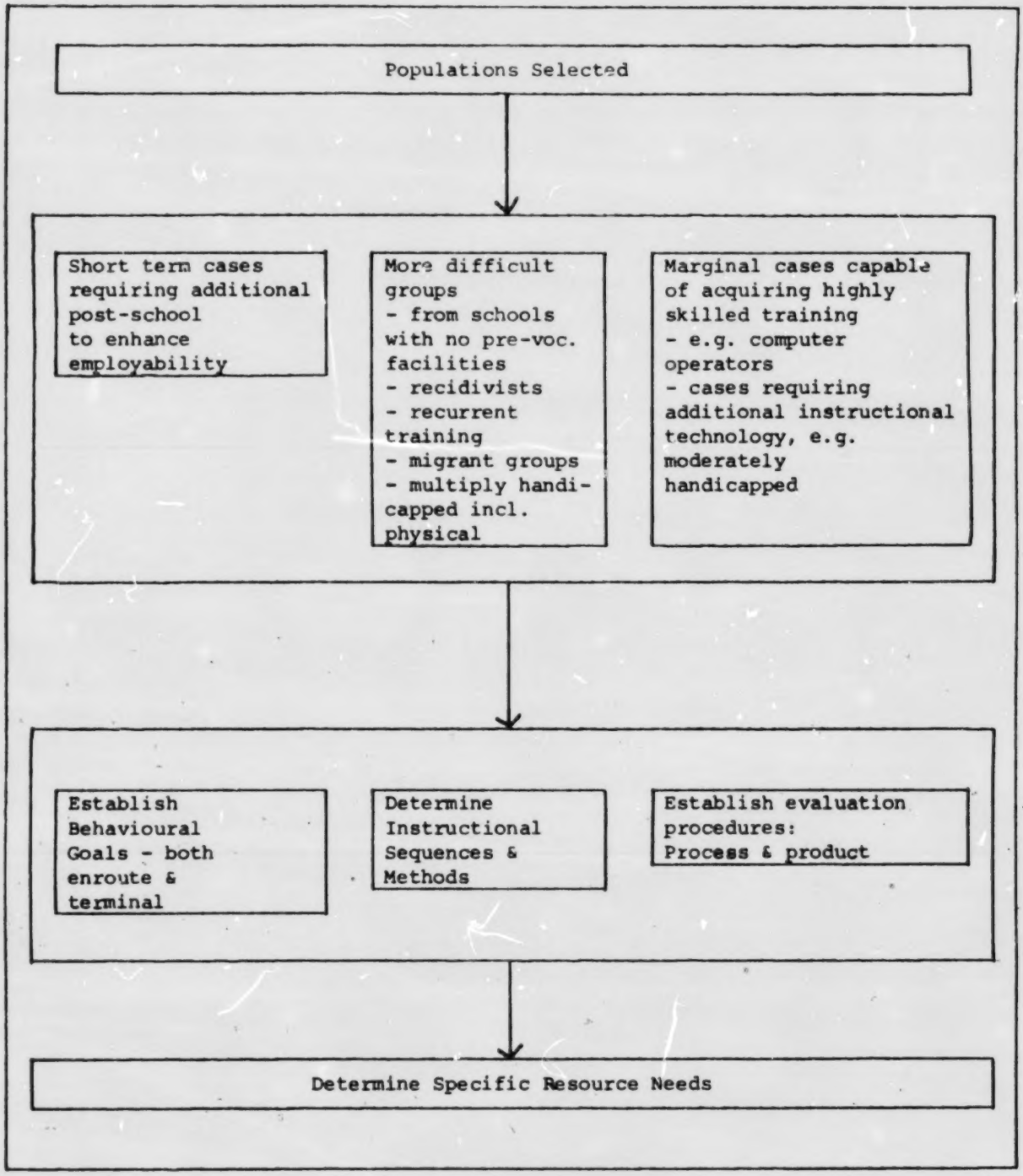
Populations Selected
Short term cases requiring additional post-school to enhance employability
More difficult groups
- from schools with no pre-voc. facilities
- recidivists
- recurrent training
- migrant groups
- multiply handicapped incl. physical
Marginal cases capable of acquiring highly skilled training
- e.g. computer operators
- cases requiring additional instructional technology, e.g. moderately handicapped
Establish Behavioural Goals - both enroute & terminal
Determine Instructional Sequences & Methods
Establish evaluation procedures: Process & product
Determine Specific Resource Needs

FIG. 2. DECISION MODEL FOR THE EXPANSION OF WORK PREPARATION FACILITIES FOR THE MILDLY INTELLECTUALLY HANDICAPPED

Part 2: Steps leading to the determination of resource needs

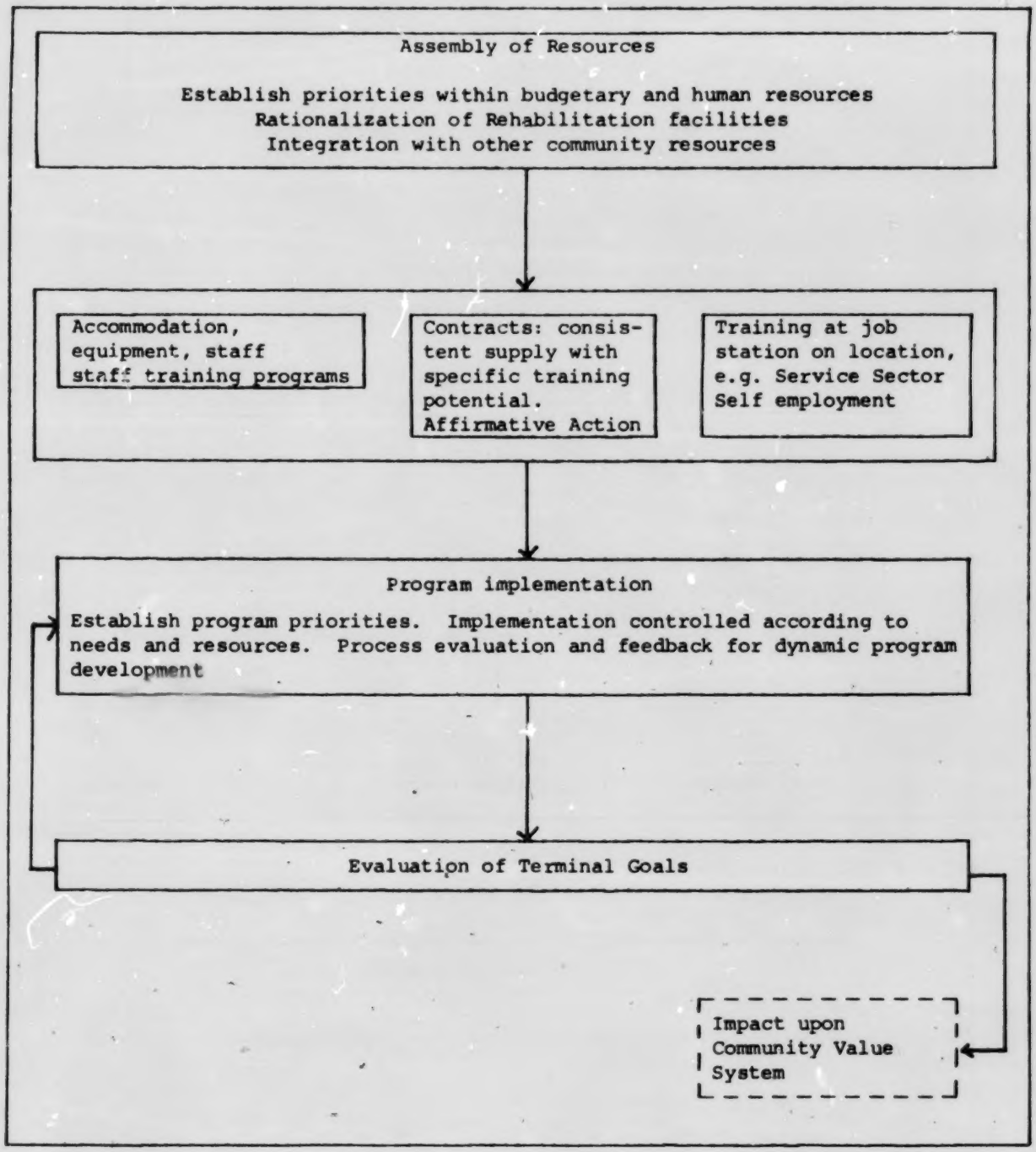
Assembly of Resources
Establish priorities within budgetary and human resources
Rationalization of Rehabilitation facilities
Integration with other community resources
Accommodation, equipment, staff staff training programs
Contracts: consistent supply with specific training potential. Affirmative Action
Training at job station on location, e.g. Service Sector Self employment
Program implementation
Establish program priorities. Implementation controlled according to needs and resources. Process evaluation and feedback for dynamic program development
Evaluation of Terminal Goals
Impact upon Community Value System

FIG. 3. DECISION MODEL FOR THE EXPANSION OF WORK PREPARATION FACILITIES FOR THE MILDLY INTELLECTUALLY HANDICAPPED

Part 3: Steps leading to the evaluation of terminal goals

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Ms Riches has had experience in teaching physically handicapped children and she is currently completing post graduate studies in association with the WPC project.